REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 8, 2004. Claims 19 to 30, 40 and 46 remain pending in the application, with Claim 48 having been canceled herein. Claims 19, 40 and 46 are the independent claims herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 19 to 24, 26, 40, 46 and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,991,276 (Yamamoto) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,774,857 (Newlin) and U.S. Patent No. 5,673,205 (Brunson), and Claims 25 and 27 to 30 were rejected under § 103(a) over Yamamoto in view of Newlin and Brunson and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,404,747 (Berry). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns controlling communications between different types of terminals in a video conferencing environment. For instance, some terminals may be dedicated video conference terminals that communicate using moving image data and voice data, while others may be general-purpose (e.g., personal computer) terminals that communicate using still image data and text data, but not voice data. In controlling the communications, a control apparatus receives image data and voice data from a first terminal, recognizes the voice data and generates text data based on the voice data, and generates an image file based on the received image data. Then, based on the type of second terminal that the data is to be communicated to, a way of distributing the data is controlled. For instance, if the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, then the generated text data and the generated image file is distributed to the second terminal. On the other hand, if the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal, then the received image data and voice data are distributed to the second terminal by a

predetermined video conference protocol. As a result, users of a personal computer that don't generally have video conferencing capabilities can participate in a video conference session using text chat in conjunction with generated still images, thanks to the control apparatus of the present invention.

With specific reference to the claims, independent Claim 19 is a data communication control apparatus for communicating with a plurality of terminals, comprising a receiving device adapted to receive image data and voice data from a first terminal which communicates image data and voice data to be distributed to a second terminal which communicates via at least text data or voice data, a voice recognition device adapted to recognize the voice data from the first terminal and to generate text data based upon the recognized voice data, an image file generating device adapted to generate an image file on the basis of the received image data, a control device adapted to control a way of distributing data corresponding to a kind of the second terminal, and a data distributing device adapted to distribute the generated text data generated by the voice recognition device and the generated image file generated by the image file generating device to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, and to distribute the image data and the voice data by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal.

Independent Claims 40 and 46 are method and recording medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 19.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of a control apparatus controlling

a way of distributing data corresponding to a kind of second terminal, wherein text data generated from received and recognized voice data and an image file generated based on received image data is distributed to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, and the received image data and voice data is distributed by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal.

Yamamoto is seen to disclose a video conference system that includes a plurality of video conference terminals, a video conference server and a video conference administrator. Yamamoto's video conference server multiplexes image data and text data, and distributes the multiplexed data to a user terminal via the same ATM-SW 8 as shown in Figures 3, 6 and 7. However, as readily admitted in the Office Action, Yamamoto fails to disclose a voice recognition unit that recognizes voice data and that generates text data based upon the recognized voice data. Accordingly, Yamamoto also cannot control a way of distributing received image data and voice data to the second terminal based on a kind of the second terminal.

Newlin is merely seen to disclose audio and video compression and decompression, preferably utilizing ITU H.32x protocols. The audio signal is processed by a speech recognition subsystem 307 of a speech visualization apparatus 201. Thus, while Newlin may perform speech recognition, it is not seen to disclose or to suggest controlling a way of distributing received image data and voice data based on a type of the second terminal, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with Yamamoto, would have resulted in at least the feature of a control apparatus controlling a way of distributing data corresponding to a kind of second terminal, wherein text data generated from received and recognized voice data and an image file

generated based on received image data is distributed to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, and received image data and voice data is distributed by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal.

Brunson is merely seen to disclose playing back a soundtrack of a video message to a recipient and conveying an image frame to the recipient in response to receipt of a request from the recipient. However, Brunson is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with Yamamoto and/or Newlin, would have resulted in at least the feature of a control apparatus controlling a way of distributing data corresponding to a kind of second terminal, wherein text data generated from received and recognized voice data and an image file generated based on received image data is distributed to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, and received image data and voice data is distributed by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal.

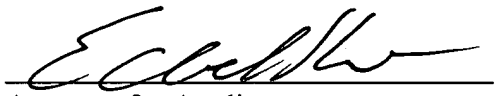
Berry is not seen to add anything to overcome the deficiencies of Yamamoto, Newlin or Brunson, and is also not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with the foregoing references, would have resulted in at least the feature of a control apparatus controlling a way of distributing data corresponding to a kind of second terminal, wherein text data generated from received and recognized voice data and an image file generated based on received image data is distributed to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, and received image data and voice data is distributed by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal in a case where the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal.

In light of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, all of Claims 19 to 30, 40 and 46 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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